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ADA American Dental Association

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The Bureau of Economic and Behavioral Research

1986

The 1986 Survey of Dental Practice

Patient Visits to the Dentist

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PATIENT VISITS TO THE DENTIST
FOR THE YEAR 1985

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HIGHLIGHTS

* For independent dentists, the mean weekly total patient visits excluding those with hygienist appointments only (scheduled visits, walk-ins, plus emergency visits) was 63.8. Independent general practitioners treated 58.1, while independent specialists treated an average of 96.7 per week.

* For independent dentists, the mean weekly total patient visits (including hygienist visits, scheduled visits, walk-ins, plus emergency visits) was 78.9. Independent general practitioners treated 74.8, while independent specialists treated an average of 102.2 per week.

* For all dentists, "no-shows" accounted for, on average, a loss of 6.8% of scheduled weekly appointments (including those primarily for hygiene treatment.)

* For all dentists, the average number of emergency visits per week was 4.6, with general practitioners seeing 4.5, and specialists 5.1 per week.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides descriptive statistics from the 1986 Survey of Dental Practice on the different components of patient visits to the private practitioners in the U.S. for the year 1985. Areas examined are scheduled appointments, total number of visits, no-shows, walk-ins, and emergency visits. Visits including hygienist appointments are summarized separately from those not including hygienist appointments. Dentists were asked to respond to the survey regarding patient care that thet personally provided in 1985.

Data for weekly are yearly visits are provided. Yearly data is obtained by multiplying weekly figures by the number of weeks worked per year.

Tables are presented separately for all dentists (all private practitioners), independent (owner) dentists, solo dentists, and independent dentists graduating since 1980. The tables present detailed data broken down by general practitioner and specialist status for each of the four categories.

ALL DENTISTS

The average number of total patients' visits per week for all dentists, including hygienist visits, was 7.8. This figure includes scheduled visits plus walk-ins and emergency visits. Excluding hygienist visits, the mean number of total patients' visits per week was 63.1.

For all dentists, there were about 2.5 patient walk-in visits and 4.6 emergency visits per week. Including hygienist visits, the mean number of patient no-shows was 4.8 per week; excluding hygienist visits, 3.6 per week. Excluding hygienist visits, the average number of total patient visits per week for a general practitioner is 57.4. For a specialist, the number is 97.3.

Annually, excluding hygienist visits, the total number of patient visits for all dentists was 2,993. The mean for general practitioners was 2,737 and specialists saw 4,522. Including hygienist visits, the annual figures become 3,699 total patient visits for all dentists; general practitioners reported 3,518 and specialists reported 4,776.

For all dentists, no-shows account for a loss of 6.8% of weekly scheduled appointments.

The average number of emergency visits per week for all dentists is 4.6. General practitoners treat 4.5, while specialists see 5.1 emergencies weekly.

ALL DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	71.1	1556	101.9	522	75.6	2078
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	1580	2.7	519	2.5	2099
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.5	1580	5.1	521	4.6	2101
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	66.8	1518	95.2	504	70.9	2022
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	73.9	1497	102.8	485	78.0	1982
NO-SHOWS	4.4	1518	6.9	504	4.8	2022

ALL DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	53.4	1589	96.1	535	59.7	2124
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	1580	2.7	519	2.5	2099
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.5	1580	5.1	521	4.6	2101
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	50.3	1561	89.5	518	56.0	2079
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	57.4	1537	97.3	499	63.1	2036
NO-SHOWS	3.1	1559	6.7	516	3.6	2075

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

ALL DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3384.9	1553	4747.0	520	3585.4	2073
WALK-IN VISITS	119.2	1580	125.1	519	120.1	2099
EMERGENCY VISITS	212.9	1580	238.0	521	216.5	2101
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3180.0	1518	4416.4	504	3360.7	2022
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3518.6	1497	4775.8	485	3698.6	1982
NO-SHOWS	209.9	1518	322.4	504	226.3	2022

ALL DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2548.3	1589	4470.9	535	2832.6	2124
WALK-IN VISITS	119.2	1580	125.1	519	120.1	2099
EMERGENCY VISITS	212.9	1580	238.0	521	216.5	2101
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2401.1	1561	4156.4	518	2657.5	2079
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2737.3	1537	4521.5	499	2993.1	2036
NO-SHOWS	149.2	1559	313.3	516	173.1	2075

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

INDEPENDENTS, SOLO, AND INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980

The figures for independent and solo dentists did not differ markedly from the averages for all dentists presented earlier. As indicated in the following table, only the independent dentists graduating since 1980 show any difference from the "all dentists" mean in the number of patients treated per week.

Mean Number of Total Patient Visits per Week (Scheduled Visits plus Walk-Ins and Emergency Visits) NOT Including Hygienist Visits, 1985

	Patient Visits		
	All	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	63.1	57.4	97.3
Independent Dentists	63.8	58.1	96.7
Solo Dentists	62.5	57.0	98.3
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	50.6	50.4	*

* The number of cases is too small to ensure statistically significant results.

Source: American Dental Association, 1986 Survey of Dental Practice.

Independent dentists graduating since 1980 saw, on average, 12.5 fewer patients per week than the "all dentist" category.

The following table presents the number of no-shows as a percentage of scheduled visits for each of the four categories.

Mean "No-Shows" as a Percentage
of Scheduled Visits per Week,
Including Hygienist Visits, 1985

	All	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	6.8%	6.6%	7.2%
Independent Dentists	6.5	6.5	6.8
Solo Dentists	6.0	6.1	6.1
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	8.3	8.5	*

* The number of cases is too small to ensure statistically reliable results.

Source: American Dental Association, 1986 Survey of Dental Practice.

For all dentists, the overall loss of weekly scheduled appointments due to no-shows was 6.8%. This figure is slightly higher for independent dentists graduating since 1980.

On average, all dentists saw 4.6 patients on an emergency basis per week in 1985. Specialists saw slightly more, 5.1, while general practitioners saw 4.5 emergency patients per week. The following tables present the average number of emergency visits per week for all dentists, independent dentists, solo dentists and independent dentists graduating since 1980.

Mean Emergency Visits per Week, 1985

	All	General Practitioners	Specialists
All Dentists	4.6	4.5	5.1
Independent Dentists	4.6	4.5	5.0
Solo Dentists	4.2	4.2	4.3
Independent Dentists Graduating Since 1980	4.7	4.7	*

* The number of cases is too small to ensure statistically reliable results.

Source: American Dental Association, 1986 Survey of Dental Practice.

For all dentists, the overall loss of weekly scheduled appointments due to no-shows was 6.8%. This figure is slightly higher for independent dentists graduating since 1980.

On average, all dentists saw 4.6 patients on an emergency basis per week in 1985. Specialists saw slightly more, 5.1, while general practitioners saw 4.5 emergency patients per week. The following tables present the average number of emergency visits per week for all dentists, independent dentists, solo dentists and independent dentists graduating since 1980.

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	72.0	1467	101.2	508	76.4	1975
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	1481	2.6	504	2.5	1985
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.5	1482	5.0	505	4.6	1987
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	67.7	1431	94.9	490	71.8	1921
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	74.8	1410	102.2	472	78.9	1882
NO-SHOWS	4.4	1431	6.5	490	4.7	1921

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	54.1	1491	95.2	519	60.3	2010
WALK-IN VISITS	2.5	1481	2.6	504	2.5	1985
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.5	1482	5.0	505	4.6	1987
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	51.1	1463	89.2	502	56.8	1965
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	58.1	1440	96.7	484	63.8	1924
NO-SHOWS	3.1	1461	6.0	500	3.5	1961

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS WHO EMPLOY HYGIENISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	85.4	891	103.4	120	86.6	1011
WALK-IN VISITS	2.0	906	1.5	129	2.0	1035
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.7	903	4.2	130	4.7	1033
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	80.0	872	98.5	115	81.2	987
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	86.9	861	103.2	112	87.9	973
NO-SHOWS	5.5	872	6.4	115	5.5	987

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3431.5	1464	4715.4	506	3625.7	1970
WALK-IN VISITS	117.6	1481	119.7	504	117.9	1985
EMERGENCY VISITS	213.8	1482	234.3	505	216.9	1987
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3228.7	1431	4401.8	490	3404.7	1921
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3567.5	1410	4741.4	472	3740.3	1882
NO-SHOWS	209.0	1431	304.1	490	223.3	1921

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2584.4	1491	4423.4	519	2864.2	2010
WALK-IN VISITS	117.6	1481	119.7	504	117.9	1985
EMERGENCY VISITS	213.8	1482	234.3	505	216.9	1987
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2439.0	1463	4140.8	502	2694.8	1965
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2775.5	1440	4488.7	484	3028.5	1924
NO-SHOWS	148.3	1461	279.7	500	168.3	1961

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS WHO EMPLOY HYGIENISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	4070.1	890	4833.0	119	4119.3	1009
WALK-IN VISITS	97.1	906	68.8	129	95.2	1035
EMERGENCY VISITS	226.3	903	193.1	130	224.0	1033
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3811.2	872	4575.5	115	3859.9	987
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	4142.5	861	4809.1	112	4194.4	973
NO-SHOWS	261.1	872	295.3	115	263.3	987

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

SOLO DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	71.4	1077	103.0	329	75.7	1456
WALK-IN VISITS	2.4	1083	2.7	326	2.4	1409
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.2	1086	4.3	328	4.2	1414
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	67.3	1052	97.3	316	71.4	1368
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	74.1	1033	103.8	305	78.0	1338
NO-SHOWS	4.1	1052	5.9	316	4.3	1368

SOLO DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	52.9	1093	97.2	336	59.5	1429
WALK-IN VISITS	2.4	1083	2.7	326	2.4	1409
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.2	1086	4.3	328	4.2	1414
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	50.3	1073	91.6	325	55.9	1398
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	57.0	1052	98.3	314	62.5	1366
NO-SHOWS	2.7	1071	5.3	323	3.0	1394

SOLO DENTISTS WHO EMPLOY HYGIENISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	88.8	592	108.9	63	89.8	655
WALK-IN VISITS	1.9	600	1.5	68	1.9	669
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.6	599	3.9	71	4.6	670
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	83.1	579	102.0	61	84.1	640
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	89.8	570	107.7	59	90.7	629
NO-SHOWS	5.6	579	8.1	61	5.8	640

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

SOLO DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3406.3	1075	4777.3	327	3592.2	1402
WALK-IN VISITS	113.6	1083	125.7	326	115.2	1409
EMERGENCY VISITS	201.4	1086	202.5	328	201.5	1414
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3210.8	1052	4487.8	316	3382.0	1368
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3532.0	1033	4793.8	305	3698.7	1338
NO-SHOWS	194.6	1052	268.3	316	204.5	1368

SOLO DENTISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2531.6	1093	4496.8	336	2800.5	1429
WALK-IN VISITS	113.6	1083	125.7	326	115.2	1409
EMERGENCY VISITS	201.4	1086	202.5	328	201.5	1414
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2403.7	1073	4234.8	325	2651.0	1398
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2722.2	1052	4547.5	314	2965.6	1366
NO-SHOWS	127.9	1071	243.7	323	143.5	1394

SOLO DENTISTS WHO EMPLOY HYGIENISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	4231.7	592	5096.3	62	4276.0	654
WALK-IN VISITS	91.0	600	69.8	69	89.3	669
EMERGENCY VISITS	222.8	599	178.5	71	220.2	670
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3961.4	579	4712.5	61	4000.1	640
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	4282.4	570	5000.7	59	4318.8	629
NO-SHOWS	268.1	579	377.8	61	273.8	640

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	54.9	141	61.5	2	54.9	143
WALK-IN VISITS	2.6	145	5.0	2	2.6	147
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.7	144	5.0	2	4.7	146
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	50.6	139	61.3	2	50.7	141
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	58.1	137	71.3	2	58.2	139
NO-SHOWS	4.3	139	0.3	2	4.2	141

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	46.1	146	60.0	2	46.2	148
WALK-IN VISITS	2.6	145	5.0	2	2.6	147
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.7	144	5.0	2	4.7	146
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	42.7	145	60.0	2	42.8	147
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	50.4	141	70.0	2	50.6	143
NO-SHOWS	3.4	144	0.0	2	3.3	146

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980 WHO EMPLOY HYGIENISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER WEEK, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	68.3	70	23.0	1	67.8	71
WALK-IN VISITS	2.3	74	0.0	1	2.3	75
EMERGENCY VISITS	4.6	72	0.0	1	4.5	73
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	62.5	69	22.5	1	62.2	70
TOTAL VISITS PER WEEK	69.5	68	22.5	1	69.2	69
NO-SHOWS	5.6	69	0.5	1	5.6	70

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2700.5	140	2848.0	2	2701.5	142
WALK-IN VISITS	125.6	145	225.0	2	126.3	147
EMERGENCY VISITS	226.9	144	225.0	2	226.8	146
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2482.4	139	2835.0	2	2485.0	141
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2850.1	137	3285.0	2	2853.4	139
NO-SHOWS	207.6	139	13.0	2	206.2	141

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, NOT INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	2261.6	146	2770.0	2	2265.1	148
WALK-IN VISITS	125.6	145	225.0	2	126.3	147
EMERGENCY VISITS	226.9	144	225.0	2	226.8	146
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	2092.9	145	2770.0	2	2097.7	147
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	2471.5	141	3220.0	2	2476.9	143
NO-SHOWS	162.9	144	0.0	2	161.7	146

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS GRADUATING SINCE 1980 WHO EMPLOY HYGIENISTS
MEAN NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS AND PATIENT VISITS
PER YEAR, INCLUDING HYGIENIST APPOINTMENTS, 1985

	TYPE OF DENTIST					
	GENERAL PRACTITIONER		SPECIALIST		ALL - WEIGHTED	
	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER	MEAN	NUMBER
APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED	3335.5	70	1196.0	1	3319.8	71
WALK-IN VISITS	111.1	74	0.0	1	110.3	75
EMERGENCY VISITS	221.8	72	0.0	1	220.2	73
SCHEDULED VISITS TREATED	3050.0	69	1170.0	1	3036.1	70
TOTAL VISITS PER YEAR	3395.4	68	1170.0	1	3378.6	69
NO-SHOWS	275.6	69	26.0	1	273.8	70

SOURCE: AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION, 1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE.

Methodology and Definitions

INTRODUCTION

The 1986 Survey of Dental Practice (SDP) is a continuation of the series of surveys that have been conducted every two to three years since the early 1950's, annually since 1982, by the American Dental Association's Bureau of Economic and Behavioral Research. The purpose of the survey is to provide reliable information on selected characteristics of private practice in the United States.

The 1986 SDP consisted of detailed questions dealing with expenses of operating a private practice, net and gross income from the private practice of dentistry, the number of patient visits to the dentist, hours and weeks worked in the practice, occupational status and employment status, practice personnel mix, auxiliary employment and wages, and other selected characteristics.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The 1986 SDP was a condensed version of the long-form 1985 SDP. This short-form of the survey was sent to 4% of the dentists who were known to be actively engaged in the private practice of dentistry.

Sampling

The population consisted of 129,039 dentists who, based on the 1982 Distribution of Dentists, were known to be in private practice, even if only part-time.

The Distribution of Dentists is a dental census that is conducted periodically by the American Dental Association. Although the 1982 Distribution is the most recent complete census, the sampling frame is updated periodically by adding information about recent graduates, retirement and deaths when available. Dentists with an unknown practice type were included in the sampling frame.

The sample was ordered by type of practice - general practitioner or specialist. Within each type, the sample was sorted by dental school and graduation year. A random sample from each type of practice was selected. Since specialists comprise a small percentage of the dental population it was necessary to oversample (i.e., the proportion of specialists sampled is higher than the actual percentage of specialists in the total population) to ensure adequate numbers for statistical analysis. It should be noted that the sample was drawn in such a way

as to be able to make statements about general practitioners and specialists as a whole. We may not have, for any given specialty, enough dentists responding to make reliable statements about that individual specialty.

Data Collection

The 1986 SDP was initially mailed in April, 1986. Two follow-up mailings to non-respondents occurred in May and June, 1986. Coding, hand-editing, and computer processing were completed by October, 1986. The final response rate was computed after the individuals who were either retired, disabled, deceased, not in private practice, or had unknown addresses were eliminated from the sample. The adjusted sample size was used to calculate the final response rate of 50.4%.

Weighting the Sample

Since the proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual percentage in the dental population, it is necessary to account for this imbalance when making statements about the total dental population. The correction is accomplished by developing and applying a weighting factor to each sampled dentist.

Weights were calculated for general practitioners and specialists separately, by dividing the percentage of each in the population by the percentage in the sample. The assumed proportion of general practitioners in the population is 85%, specialists, 15%. The percentage of general practitoners in the sample is 74.5%, specialists, 25.5%.

The weights were computed as follows:

General Practitioner - .85/.745 = 1.140939

Specialist - .15/.255 = 0.588235

These weights were employed in the calculations of means and medians where general practitioners and specialists were combined - where statements were made about "all" independent or solo dentists.

DEFINITIONS

Definitions of several terms and phrases are provided in this section to assist with the interpretation of data contained in the tables. In general, the dentists included in this report were working in private practice as a primary occupation. In addition, all dentists had started in their current (i.e., 1986) practice prior to 1985.

ALL DENTISTS: This group of dentists contains all dentists responding to the survey, including those who are employed by a dentist or dental practice.

DENTAL PRACTICE PERSONNEL (ALL STAFF): This group includes dental hygienists, chairside assistants, dental laboratory technicians, secretary/ receptionists, bookkeepers and other office personnel. Dentists employed by the practice are NOT included.

FULL-TIME and PART-TIME: For purposes of this report, full-time was defined as working in the practice at least 32 hours per week. Part-time was defined as working in the practice less than 32 hours per week.

HOURLY SALARY: The hourly salary reported is computed by dividing the weekly salary by the number of hours worked.

INDEPENDENT DENTISTS: All dentists who own or share in the ownership of a dental practice are independent dentists. This ownership status includes sole proprietorship, partnership and a shareholder in an incorporated practice.

MEAN: This is the simple average of values reported by the dentists responding to the survey. The mean is calculated by summing the values reported and then dividing the sum by the number of dentists reporting values.

MEAN PER YEAR: Several variables in the tables are reported as means per year (e.g., mean number of appointments per year). The per year figures were determined by multiplying the per week values reported by dentists, by the number of weeks worked in the office for the year.

NONOWNER DENTISTS (EMPLOYED): This group includes all dentists who work in a dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage or associate basis.

NONSOLO DENTISTS: Nonsolo dentists work in a dental practice with at least one other dentist. Some of these dentists may be employed by the owner dentists in the practice.

PATIENT NO-SHOWS: The total of patient no-shows was defined as the difference between the number of patient appointments and the number of scheduled visits. It was assumed that the number of scheduled visits were equal to or less than the number of patient appointments.

REGIONS: The following is a breakdown of the states in each region.

New England: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
Middle Atlantic: NJ, NY, PA
East North Central: IL, IN, MI, OH, WI
West North Central: EA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD
South Atlantic: DE, MD, DC, FL, GA, NC, SC, VA, WV
East South Central: AL, KY, MS, TN
West South Central: AR, LA, OD, TX
Mountain: AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY
Pacific: AK, CA, HI, OR, WA

SCHEDULED VISITS: Scheduled visits are the patient appointments who were present in the office for treatment.

SOLO DENTISTS: All dentists who work in private practice with no other dentists are solos. A solo dentist is also a sole proprietor or the only shareholder in an incorporated practice.

TOTAL PATIENT VISITS: Total patient visits is the sum of walk-in visits, emergency visits, and scheduled visits.

WEIGHTING: Since specialists comprise a smaller percentage of the dental population, it was necessary to oversample them to insure adequate numbers for statistical analysis. The proportion of specialists in the sample is higher than the actual proportion of specialists in the total population of dentists. Please note that individual specialties were not oversampled, and, therefore, only statistics on specialists as a group are presented. Statistics computed for All Dentists were weighted to reflect national proportions.

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1986 SURVEY OF DENTAL PRACTICE

Please answer all questions by **circling** the number corresponding to the most appropriate response, except where a fill in the blank is requested.

1. Which of the following **best** describes your primary and/or secondary occupation(s) during 1985? Please circle **one** response for **EACH** column.)

	Primary Occupation	Secondary Occupation
a. Private practice (full- or part-time)	00	00
b. Dental school faculty/staff member	01	01
c. Armed Forces	02	02
d. Other federal services (e.g., VA, PHS)	03	03
e. State or local government employed	04	04
f. Hospital staff dentist	05	05
g. Intern/resident	06	06
h. Other student	07	07
i. Other health/dental organization staff member (e.g., NIDR)	08	08
j. Not in practice/retired	09	09
k. Occupation unrelated to dentistry	10	10
l. **NO SECONDARY OCCUPATION**	—	11

Please complete the remainder of this questionnaire if you were in **PRIVATE PRACTICE** during **ANY PART** of 1985 as:

1. a **PRIMARY** occupation, **OR**
2. a **SECONDARY** occupation, **OR**
3. both a **PRIMARY** and **SECONDARY** occupation.

If you were **NOT INVOLVED** in the **PRIVATE PRACTICE** of dentistry during any part of 1985 please **RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.** Thank you.

INDIVIDUAL DENTIST QUESTIONS

The following questions pertain to you as an individual private practitioner. If you changed practices (i.e., worked in more than one **PRIMARY** practice during 1985), please give information on the practice in which you treated patients for the greatest number of months.

2. Are you currently **ANNOUNCING** yourself and practicing as a specialist in an ADA recognized specialty area (dental public health, endodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral pathology, orthodontics, pediatric dentistry, periodontics, or prosthodontics)?

Yes 1
No 2

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
3. In what year did you **FIRST** become associated with the primary/secondary practice where you practiced during 1985?	19 ____	19 ____

4. Which **ONE** of the following **BEST** describes your employment status when you **FIRST** became associated with that practice?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice	1	1
b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership	2	2
c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice	3	3
d. Employed by an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder	4	4
e. Employed by an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis	5	5
f. Independent contractor	6	6
g. Other, please specify _____		

5. Which **ONE** of the following **BEST** describes your employment status in that practice during 1985?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Sole proprietor (i.e., the only owner) in an unincorporated dental practice	1	1
b. Partner in a complete or limited partnership	2	2
c. Shareholder in an incorporated dental practice	3	3
d. Employed in an incorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis but not a shareholder	4	4
e. Employed in an unincorporated dental practice on a salary, commission, percentage, or associate basis	5	5
f. Independent contractor	6	6
g. Other, please specify _____		

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
6. What was the zip code of your practice(s) during 1985?	_____	_____
	zip code	

7. Please indicate the following regarding patient care that **YOU PERSONALLY** provided during 1985?

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
The average number of:		
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ appointments per week	
b. **WALK-IN VISITS** per week that **YOU** treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled.) (If none, enter zero.)	_____ visits per week	
c. **EMERGENCY VISITS** per week that **YOU** treated (i.e., no appointment scheduled.) (If none, enter zero.)	_____ visits per week	
d. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that **YOU ACTUALLY** treated (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only	_____ visits per week	

8. Please answer the following about the time **YOU PERSONALLY** spent in the practice(s) during 1985.

	Primary Practice	Secondary Practice
a. Total number of weeks worked (excluding vacation)	_____ weeks	
b. Total number of **HOURS PER WEEK** spent in the practice	_____ hours per week	
c. Number of hours per week spent **TREATING PATIENTS** in the practice	_____ hours per week	

9. What was **YOUR** 1985 net income (after practice expenses and business taxes) from: (Please include salary, commission and or dividends.)

	Net Income
a. Your primary practice	$ _____ 00
b. Your secondary practice (if applicable)	$ _____ 00
c. Other income from dentistry (i.e., teaching, research, other practice, etc.)	$ _____ 00

If you were in private practice as a **PRIMARY OCCUPATION** during 1985, please continue.

If you were **NOT** in private practice as a **PRIMARY OCCUPATION** during 1985, **DO NOT CONTINUE.** Please return the questionnaire. Thank you.

ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE CHARACTERISTICS

10. **INCLUDING YOURSELF**, please indicate the number of full- or part-time **DENTIST POSITIONS** in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1985. (If none, enter zero.)

	Number of Dentist Positions
a. Number of **OWNER** dentists (i.e., sole proprietor, partners, or shareholders)	
b. Number of **NON-OWNER** dentists (i.e., employed dentists, associates and non-shareholders) If none, enter zero	

11. Please indicate the number of full-time (32 hours per week or more) and part-time (less than 32 hours per week) **EMPLOYEE POSITIONS** in the **PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1985. (If none, enter zero.)

	Number of Employee Positions	
	full-time	part-time
a. Dental hygienist(s)		
b. Chairside assistant(s)		
c. Secretary-receptionist(s)*		
d. Dental laboratory technician(s)		
e. Bookkeeper, business personnel		
f. Other, please specify		

***NOTE:** A secretary or receptionist who also provides chairside assistance at least 50% of the time should be counted as a chairside assistant.

If the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** employed any dental hygienists in 1985, please continue. If **no** hygienists were employed, skip to question 16.

12. Please provide the following regarding all dental hygienist(s) appointments and visits in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1985.

	Dental Hygienist(s)
The average number of	
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week primarily for hygienist(s) treatment	_____ appointments per week
b. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that were actually treated by all hygienist(s)	_____ visits per week

13. Which of the following was the predominant method of reimbursing dental hygienist(s) in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE**? (Circle one.)

a. Salary only 1
b. Commission only 2
c. Salary plus commission 3
d. Other, please specify _____

14. Do you consider dental hygienists to be an employee of your practice or an independent contractor? (Circle one.)

a. employee 1
b. independent contractor 2
c. Other, please specify _____

15. Please provide the following for **EACH DENTAL HYGIENIST** in the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1985. If the practice did not employ someone in these positions, please check the appropriate box in the first column.

DENTAL HYGIENIST (S):	Not applicable (Please check boxes)	1985 ANNUAL Salary/ Commission (in dollars)	Weeks Worked in 1985	Hours Worked per Week	Length of Experience PRIOR to Employment in this Practice		Length of Employment in this Practice	
Position #1	☐	$ _____ per year	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Position #2	☐	$ _____ per year	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Position #3	☐	$ _____ per year	_____ weeks	_____ hours	_____ years	_____ months	_____ years	_____ months

16. Approximately what percentage of the patients who visited the primary practice

	Entire Practice Patient Characteristics
a. were:	
14 years of age or younger	_____ %
15 to 64 years of age	_____ %
65 years of age or older	_____ %
	TOTAL 100 %
b. were members of families whose annual income is estimated to be:	
under $10,000	_____ %
$10,000 to 29,999	_____ %
$30,000 or more	_____ %
	TOTAL 100 %
c. were:	
covered by a private insurance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care	_____ %
covered by a public assistance program that pays or partially pays for their dental care	_____ %
not covered by an insurance program	_____ %
	TOTAL 100 %
d. were members of a racial minority	_____ %

If you were a solo practitioner during 1985, please skip to question 18.

17. Please indicate the following regarding patient care by the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1985.

The average number of:	Entire Practice
a. **APPOINTMENTS SCHEDULED** per week (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ appointments per week
b. **WALK-IN VISITS** per week that were treated (i.e., non-emergency and no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero	_____ visits per week
c. **EMERGENCY VISITS** per week (i.e., no appointment scheduled) If none, enter zero	_____ visits per week
d. **SCHEDULED VISITS** per week that were **ACTUALLY** treated (**EXCLUDING** those with hygienist appointments only)	_____ visits per week

18. In the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE**, what was the **total amount of fees charged** for the dental care provided during 1985 **(annual billing)**? ..... $ _____ 00

19. What percentage of the **GROSS RECEIPTS** were received (If none, enter zero.)

	Gross Receipts
a. as direct patient payment	_____ %
b. as payment from government programs (e.g., Medicare, Medicaid, or other public insurance)	_____ %
c. as direct payment from private insurance carriers	_____ %
d. from other sources of payment (Please specify) _____	_____ %
	TOTAL 100 %

20. During 1985, were any of the expenses of the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** (dental facilities or staff) shared with other dentists?

Yes 1
No 2

If you shared expenses (dental facilities or staff) with any other practice, please report **YOUR PRIMARY PRACTICE** expenses only.

21. For the following selected items, what were the **TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** for the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1985? (If no expenses were incurred for specific items, please enter zero.)

	Expenses
a. Yearly rent	$ _____ 00
b. Yearly mortgage (including interest)	$ _____ 00
c. Total salaries, wages and commissions of non-dentists employees	$ _____ 00
d. Commercial dental laboratory charges	$ _____ 00
e. Dental supplies	$ _____ 00
f. Advertising expenses	$ _____ 00
g. Bad debts	$ _____ 00

22. What were the **TOTAL PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES** of operating the **ENTIRE PRIMARY PRACTICE** during 1985? ..... $ _____ 00
(This figure should be greater than the sum of the figures in question 21.)

Thank you for your assistance in this important research project. Please return this questionnaire by folding and place tape as indicated. Drop it in the mail.